



STATE OF MICHIGAN

For Immediate Release
September 30, 2004

Contact: Jamie Callahan
1-866-525-5637

Sen. Allen and Rep. Shackleton help bring road projects to northern Michigan

LANSING – Funding for a number of road projects in northern Michigan passed the Legislature this week, announced Sen. Jason Allen.

“These road projects are critical for northern Michigan residents,” said Allen, R-Traverse City. “Keeping our roads in good shape is vital to tourism and our economy.”

House Bill 5528, the Michigan Department of Transportation budget, includes provisions to repair the Lincoln Avenue Bridge in Cheboygan, install a new traffic signal at the US-31 intersection of Bay Harbor in Emmet County and allow the Mackinac Bridge Authority to retain control of their finances.

“As chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, I am glad we were able to add these projects with the dozens of other road improvements scheduled or taking place now in northern Michigan,” said Rep. Scott Shackleton, R-Sault Ste. Marie.

The Lincoln Avenue Bridge has been on the Critical Bridge List for the past seven years. Severe weather and the application of deicing chemicals have deteriorated the bridge quicker than anticipated. As a result, load limits were set for the bridge to help slow the its continued decay.

“This bridge serves a crucial role in Cheboygan as it is one of only two bridges that cross the Cheboygan River and connects the two halves of the city,” Allen said. “This bridge needs to be fixed.”

The Legislature also reaffirmed its position in support of Mackinac Bridge Authority’s ability to manage their funds. Language was inserted in the budget that would prevent any money from the transportation budget be used to transfer the investment management functions from the Mackinac Bridge Authority to the state treasurer.

“The Mackinac Bridge Authority has done a magnificent job of managing their finances and keeping the bridge in great shape for almost 50 years,” Allen said.

HB 5528 now goes to the governor for approval.

###